

TechFest 2010 will be on Jan. 9 -- see page 3.

Remember: No meeting in December!

The GARzette

The official newsletter of the Gwinnett Amateur Radio Society
December 2009 <http://www.gars.org/> Volume 18, Issue 12

Johnny Fearon, W4WKP 1944-2009



Photo by Brian Siegmund, KF4MWI

Johnny Fearon, W4WKP, passed away on Nov. 13 after a short illness. First licensed in 1952 as WN-4WKP -- at age 7 -- Johnny was a long-time fixture in the Atlanta ham-radio community, in addition to being a lifetime member of the Gwinnett Amateur Radio Society (GARS). He was also blind since birth. He was a good guy -- we'll miss him.

During his life he touched the hearts of many amateur radio operators.

Here's what a few of them have to say:

He (Johnny) will be missed by everyone who knew him. Johnny did not let his being blind deter him from participating in our hobby to its fullest. He was a mentor to many through his years in amateur radio

-- Stan Edwards, WA4DYD

I am really sorry to hear about Johnny. Johnny and I went all the way

through North Fulton High School and graduated together. I got my Novice license, KN4PHE, in 1959, and Johnny was already a veteran ham. Like John, W4NU, we were all in the Atlanta Teenage Radio Club in the '60s. I think all of us that used to go to Johnny's house were in awe of his Central Electronics and Collins station. That was really neat stuff for us new hams.

I will keep Johnny in my prayers; he was a very special friend.

-- Bob Smith K4PHE

I have known Johnny since 1955. My father took me by his house when we were in Atlanta for the Atlanta Hamfest that June. I was licensed in 1954 at age 12, and Johnny had been licensed since 1952 at an even younger age, so I was a little older. Johnny attended Mercer University in Macon a few years after I had started there. At one time he was a stalwart on the GSN, typing his messages on a Braille typewriter. He operated from the dormitory at Mercer and had quite a nice signal as opposed to K4QPL's and K4BAI's signal. He used a Globe Scout using a window screen or the bed springs as an antenna. Later, he sold ham gear and I bought my first 2-meter FM rig from him at a Columbus hamfest. In between, he had graduated from a law school in Atlanta.

-- John Laney, K4BAI.

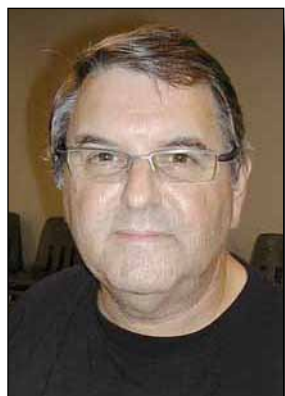
My most grateful memory of Johnny was the first time I threw my call out on the GARS 147.075 repeater. Another station started a conversation with me. Being new to all of this I was unaware of how things worked. The station that called was excited to meet a new ham and bombarded me with a stream of questions that made me feel uncomfortable.

I wanted to see if I could have my first conversation on the repeater and the other station wanted to cross examine me in order to extract my entire life history. The ham did not mean to

Continued on page 4

A note from the President

Another GARS year is just about gone. It just keeps getting better. I received my first WAS award from the ARRL. I added three antennas. My XYL is still my best partner. Two dog shows. Big Field Day. Best JOTA yet. TechFest was great. A grand list of programs. I went to Curacao for the ARRL International DX contest (and we won our category).



**Norm Schklar
WA4ZXV**

We grew the membership. Father Harrison didn't complain even once. The new repeater controller is just about ready. We took down antennas from towers, installed antennas on towers. GARS displayed at several hamfests. We got our section mom back to the club. Some ups and downs with our network, but it is always there when we need it. There were parades, breakfasts, exec meetings, antenna parties. It just keeps on happening. And it needs mentioning; help with silent key estate sales.

And it took every one of you to make all this fun stuff happen. Yes, you, the ones that show up at meetings and enjoy the programs, the ones that

come out for the heavy work, the ones that help with setup and tear down of all our activities, the ones with suggestions for programs, the ones that laugh at silly things that happen in front of the club meetings. The ones that don't laugh when you shouldn't. The ones that pay their dues. The ones that stand up for half a day or six days a year at fund raisers. The ones that plan and prepare food. The ones that wear metal hats. The ones that present at meetings. The ones that serve as advisors for the club and help us stay focused. The ones that eagerly support emergency communications. The ones that keep our Scout Venture Crew functioning. The ones on the executive committee that give up extra hours each month for meetings.

And then there is the whole other group. It's the spouses and families that give up their time with you so you may participate. Yes, it takes a community to support a great amateur radio club. And we have a great community.

I wish each of you the best for the holiday season and a great year in 2010.

Other officers:

[Earl Whatley, AF4FG, VP](#)
[Randy Collins, N4COR, secretary](#)
[Dick Sandberg, N9SXJ, treasurer](#)
[Kyle Albritton, W4KDA, prog.](#)

Board of Directors

[David Adcock, KA4KKF](#)
[John Davis, WB4QDX](#)
[David Bruse, W4DTR](#)

The GARzette is the official monthly organ of the Gwinnett Amateur Radio Society, serving its members and other persons interested in the advancement of the amateur radio art.

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If possible, bring your articles to the monthly meeting in Microsoft Word format or email to n2est@arrl.net. Artwork can be accepted in most any graphics format and can be submitted via email to the same address. Alternate means of submittal can be arranged when necessary. In keeping with the amateur radio spirit, permission is hereby granted for the reproduction of The GARzette articles by other amateur radio club newsletters provided that proper credit is given to the individual author and to The GARzette.

The GARzette is published each month with the assistance of Bill Cherepy, WB4WTN, who stamps and gets the end product to the Post Office each month. Norm Schklar, WA4ZXV, manages email delivery. Many thanks to each of them and all article contributors. Deadline for submissions is the 20th of each month for inclusion in the following month's issue.

For additional info contact:
Newsletter Editor:
Jim Massara, N2EST
(678) 380-8025

TechFest slated for Jan. 9, 2010, at Lawrenceville meeting place

Be sure to mark your calendars for TechFest 2010, an official ARRL hamfest, on Jan 9 at St. Marguerite D'Youville Church in Lawrenceville.

This TechFest is going to be our biggest and best ever. We'll have several clubs set up to talk to prospective members and go over their specialty in amateur radio. You will also find a technical demonstration on DSTAR. We're planning on satellite, Echolink, PSK31, CW, QRP equipment, HF

stations, a booth from the ARRL and a special ARRL youth table.

We'll start out with a free tailgating session from 8 a.m. until noon, then open up the displays at 10 a.m.. Don't be surprised to see the Southeastern DX Club, the ARRL, Gwinnett ARES, Venture Crew 73 -- and we're still adding.

We'll also have a chili cook-off. Bring a crockpot of your favorite recipe.

A lunch of hamburgers, hot dogs, and chili will be served a little before noon.

If you have a special interest in some mode of amateur radio or electronics and would like to share your equipment and experiences with the community, e-mail [David Adcock, KA4KKF](mailto:David.Adcock@KA4KKF).

For more information and a map to St. Marguerite's, go to http://www.gars.org/sharedborder/Event_Archive/2010/Techfest10/techfest10.html

BSA Venture Crew 73 Wants You

If you are between 14 and 21 years old, enjoy outdoor activities and have an interest in radio technology, Venture Crew 73 is for you.

- Venture Crews are part of the Boy Scouts of America.
- Venture crew 73 is chartered by the Gwinnett Amateur Radio Society.
- Venture crew 73 is coed.
- Meetings are on the second Tuesday of the month, 7:00 p.m., at the St. Marguerite D'Youville Catholic Church, 85 Gloster Rd. NW, Lawrenceville, GA 30044.
- Crew 73 is a youth-run organization, which means that our Crew President and other youth plan the Crew's outings and activities each month. We enjoy:
 - Camping
 - Hiking
 - Horse Back Riding
 - Shooting Sports
- Crew activities usually mix high adventure and the use of amateur radio.
- For more information, either show up at our next meeting or contact:

Steve Back, WB2OGY, Venture Crew 73 Committee Chairman

- Phone: 770-712-9069
 - Email: committeechair@venturecrew73.org
- Jeff Lee, AF4JL, Venture Crew 73 Advisor
- Phone: 678-475-3165
 - Email: advisor@venturecrew73.org

GARS Communication System

70 Cm Repeater

444.525(+) MHz
82.5 PL Tone

APRS

144.390 -- 1200 Baud
W4GR

6 Meter Repeater

53.110 (-1 MHz)
82.5 PL Tone

D-Star

WD4STR
145.060 - (600KHZ)
440.550 + (5MHZ)

2 Meter Repeater

147.075(+) MHz
82.5 PL Tone

Main Repeater Site

Oak Street, Lawrenceville

Backup Repeater Site

Lanier Mountain, Snellville

Remote Receive Sites

Bogan Road, Buford
Lanier Mountain, Snellville

make me feel uncomfortable and was unaware of how I was feeling; he was just over-exuberant in getting to know a new ham.

Feeling trapped, apprehensive, and not sure of repeater etiquette, I was scrambling to figure out how to remove myself from the situation gracefully when Johnny rode up like the Calvary. Johnny often monitored the repeater and was more than likely the one to answer a new voice's first transmission. With expertise and finesse, he entered the conversation and directed the conversation into a normal exchange for a first timer. He was there to lend a hand and was able to do so with grace and diplomacy that did not offend the other station. The three of us had a nice conversation for a little while.

Johnny was able to turn a cold prickly first experience into a warm fuzzy one that has always served me as a crystal example of how amateur operators should behave. Johnny is missed, but I am proud to carry a small portion of his spirit forward to share with others in Johnny's image

-- Scott Hartlage, KF4PWI

I have known Johnny since 1959. He lived on Club Drive then in Brookhaven. His father was Harold Fearon, who was a very successful

insurance executive. Johnny then had a windmill tower with a Hy-Gain tribander. His rig was the Central Electronics 100V and the receiver was Collins.

Members of the Atlanta Teenage Radio Club used to meet over there for eyeballs and highballs. Those were the days! In fact, Johnny and I double dated around 1960. I always thought a lot of Johnny

-- John Harden, W4NU (ex-K4JAG)

While I am not a "native" Atlantan, I consider my self almost a native; I've been here since 1971. I first met Johnny during a session at the Atlanta Radio Club hamfest. I visited him several times when he was selling equipment, and then a few years later he and I manned the 20-meter phone station for the Douglas County Radio club during Field Day. I was constantly amazed at how Johnny could pick out calls in pile-ups as we worked thru the night

-- Jack Ray, W4JBR (ex-K4MZW)

I was at the meeting a couple years ago when GARS granted Johnny a lifetime membership. He stood up and addressed us all. It meant so much to him that we would do this, he became very emotional from happiness. I really did not know Johnny, but that is a bit-sweet memory I have of him.

-- Kyle Albritton, W4KDA

Photo by Brian Page, N4TRB



It was a Field Day at Rhodes Jordan Park, 1998, the second one I'd been to. I decided to pull an all-nighter and learn more about propagation throughout one night. Going from one station to another to see if there was any activity, I only saw one man on 20 or 40 meters

rapping out the code, and he seemed to really enjoy it! I introduced myself and asked if I could record for him in almost pitch darkness. It was about 2 a.m. We talked while he sent code at 20 wpm-plus, which I thought was amazing. His name was Johnny. He said he'd been blind since early childhood. As the morning started to get a little brighter off in the east, I continually commented on what I saw around that beautiful park as the sun slowly rose. He was, for me, an inspiration. We'll miss you, Johnny.

-- Winslow Jackson, N1TWX

Any time I saw Johnny, be it at a meeting, hamfest, or Field Day, he knew my voice and we always had something to talk about. May God hold him close to His heart.

-- Larry Tews, N8IAA

One day I heard Johnny announce on the repeater that he was mobile, and, knowing full well he was blind, I asked him if he was doing the driving. Well, *he* thought it was funny ...

-- Jim Massara, N2EST

I had just taken my ham license test in 1997 before I went to London. When I got home, Johnny called me that night and congratulated me on the new call sign and getting my license. I did not even know what it was until he called. I was quite excited. This was the first time I had ever talked to him.

Johnny was a very good man and will be missed.

-- Brian Siegmund, KF4MWI

One of the first persons that I met when attending my first GARS meeting many years ago was W4WKP. Johnny and I hit it off right away because we were both CW enthusiasts. He had such enthusiasm for ham radio that I knew I was going to join this group that very night. But that was always Johnny's approach to everyone attending a GARS

meeting for the first time. Johnny loved ham radio and he loved the GARS organization. He was a real salesman. I am sure, as President of GARS for several terms; Johnny built up a sincere concern for the growth of the club. He was always asking me if I knew of any new hams that had moved into the area that GARS needed to contact. Who was new on the repeater? He often would ask members, including myself, to make blind telephone calls to new hams in the area to help increase the membership. I bet many of our members were contacted just like that -- by an unexpected telephone call urging them to attend a GARS meeting.

Over time, Johnny and I became close friends. He often discussed his early ham days and his big towers. He told me once about a time when he was in college that he and some of his buddies went out carousing in one of the fellows' new convertible. As things would have it, the group managed to visit several nearby "watering holes." By the time they arrived back on campus, it was decided that Johnny (who probably had almost as much to drink as the rest of the fellows) was best qualified to make the final drive back to their campus abodes. So there they were with Johnny at the wheel and with three tipsy college men telling him when to turn and when to go straight. I never corroborated that story, but it certainly would not have been any more ridiculous than some of the stunts that were pulled when I was in college. So I am inclined to believe something like that may have taken place.

Field Day is one of my favorite amateur radio events. Some of the

most memorable Field dDays that I have attended were with GARS at Rhodes Jordan Park. Johnny and I would team up as part of the 40-meter CW station group. Johnny had great ears for CW. It was a pleasure to log for him. Johnny could pull out a weak station sending at 35 wpm that I could not even hear, let alone copy. I think we contributed a lot of GARS score on the 40 meter station ... especially after everyone else had gone home for some sack time. At times we would really get on a roll and rack up 30 or 40 contacts per hour.

It was always a treat for me to take Johnny anywhere ... especially hamfests. In fact, we had agreed that we would walk around the Shelby Hamfest at its new location this year. It never happened because he took ill just before that event. Still, whenever I would walk Johnny around a hamfest it was a lot like escorting the President of the U.S. Everyone knew Johnny. Persons would walk from behind us and say "Hello Johnny," and without hesitation Johnny Fearon would come back with that person's name and call sign.

I sometimes believe that Johnny never felt he had a disability. And, in fact, I suppose he didn't. He may have never seen a tree, or a car, or a beautiful girl, but he was always smiling and he always had a good word for everyone. I think he was able to see things better than most of us because he was not distracted by appearance, or visual anomalies. Without eyes, he could see things as they really were -- a lesson that we all should



Photo by Brian Siegmund, KF4MWI

try to emulate. Johnny Fearon was a devout Christian and a loyal and loving husband. For me, he will always be the kind of amateur -- and the kind of role model -- that a man should strive to be. Few others that I have known could have overcome lack of sight with the true gusto and love of life of Johnny Fearon.

Now I get this funny vision in my mind of Johnny asking Saint Peter which cloud he should use to set up his ham station so he could get back on the airwaves. I think we shall all miss the melodious sound of W4WKP in CW on the air. I certainly hope that some day when I am tuning around 7020 I will hear it again.

73 fer nw Johnny, hpe to hr u agn

-- Ron Langston, WE5O

I visited with John last Thursday before he died on Friday, and I went into his room, and John was tired, and he was weak, but he was conscious, he was at himself, and he said "Brother Greg, I'm tired and I don't want to go back to another hospital." He had already told Faye "I'm ready to go." And sure enough then on Friday evening, he slipped off to be with Jesus. And I'm gonna tell you, when Faye called me to share with me the news that Johnny had just passed away, the first thought that popped into my mind was: "And now he can see."

*From the eulogy by Pastor Greg Butler, Bible Baptist Church, Monroe, Ga.
(Special thanks to John Morgan for making this quote possible.)*

Metro Atlanta VE Exam Schedule.

GARS publishes Metro Atlanta VE exam schedules as a service and is not responsible for errors or changes. Call and confirm schedules before going. All sessions are walk-in. Take copies of current license and certificate of completed elements with you to all sessions. Find additional sessions online at www.arrl-ga.org.

First Saturday, Even Months

9 a.m.
EOC Building
Butch Nitz, AF4FS
(770) 968-8780

First Wednesday

7 p.m.
ARRL/VEC
Roberts School
4681 School Street, Acworth
Jodi Escher AG4BK
(770) 387-1591

Second Saturday, Odd Months

ARRL VEC
8:30 a.m.
Stone Mountain Methodist Church
5312 West Mountain St.
Stone Mountain
Bob Varone, W4ETN
(770) 978-3179

Third Saturday

CA VEC
9 a.m.
Marietta First United Meth. Church
Room 305,
56 Whitlock Ave.
Marietta
David Still, WB4RRD
(707)973-2566

Fourth Tuesday

ARRL VEC
7 p.m.
United Way Service Center
6279 Fairburn Rd.
Douglasville

Third Sunday

W5YI VEC
3-5 p.m.

These are the ham-exam results for 2009. This includes the GARS 2009 TechFest. New hams and upgrades:

30 new Technicians
22 upgrades to General
6 upgrades to Extra

52 passing exams

Failures:
6 failed Technicians
1 failed General
2 failed Extra

9 failed exams

Special thanks to all the VE's that have volunteered their time to administer all these Ham Exams.

Remember: No Ham Exam Session in December.
See you all at the GARS 2010 TechFest!
73,
Frank Sauciunas, KF4TQV
Webmaster: Lawrenceville
Masonic Lodge No. 131
Lodge web page: <http://vlodge131.org>
Email: kf4tqv@charter.net
<http://webpages.charter.net/kf4tqv>



Lawrenceville Masonic Lodge
465 S. Perry St.
Lawrenceville, GA 30044
(770)-963-5721

Fourth Sunday

2:30 p.m.
Georgia Tech
VanLeer Elec. Building
Rm. W218
77 Atlantic Dr.
www.w4aql.com
Alexander G. Carver
(404)894-2936
acarver@ece.gatech.edu

Metro Club Meetings

First Tuesday

Kennehoochee ARC
Southern Polytechnic
State University
Meeting begins at 7:30 p.m.

Talk In 146.880(-)

Second Monday

Georgia Tech ARC
Room W218
Van Leer Electrical
Engineering Bldg.
Georgia Tech Campus
Meeting at 7:00 p.m.

First Thursday

Atlanta Radio Club
Georgia Red Cross HQ
1955 Monroe Dr., Atlanta
Meeting is at 7:30 p.m.
Talk In -146.820(-)

N.E. Georgia ARC

Commerce Public Library
Meeting is at 6:30 p.m.
Talk In - 147.225(+)
PL 123.0

Second Thursday

Alford Memorial Radio Club

Annistown Road Baptist Church
Intersection of Annistown Rd & Spain Rd
Stone Mountain
Dinner at 6:00 p.m.
Meeting at 7:30 p.m. Talk In - 146.760(-)

Third Tuesday

North Fulton Amateur Radio League

Masonic Lodge
194 Milton Avenue
Alpharetta, Georgia
meeting at 7:30 PM
Talk In - 145.47(-)

Second Saturday

North GA QRP Club
Wieuca Baptist Church on Peachtree Rd/Wieuca, 10 a.m.

GARS

APPAREL ORDER FORM

NAME: _____ PHONE # _____

CALL: _____

NAME TO BE EMBROIDERED: _____

CALL SIGN TO BE EMBROIDERED: _____

ITEM	SIZE	QUANTITY	PRICE	TOTAL
T-SHIRT				
Red WITHOUT name & call			\$20.00	
White WITHOUT name & call			\$20.00	
Red WITH name & call			\$20.00	
White WITH name & call			\$20.00	
GOLF SHIRT -- WITHOUT name & call				
Red			\$24.00	
White			\$24.00	
GOLF SHIRT -- WITH name & call				
Red			\$28.00	
White			\$28.00	
SWEATSHIRT				
Red WITHOUT name & call			\$30.00	
White WITHOUT name & call			\$30.00	
Red WITH name & call			\$30.00	
White WITH name & call			\$30.00	
LIGHTWEIGHT JACKET -- RED ONLY				
WITHOUT name & call			\$31.00	
WITH name & call			\$35.00	
HEAVYWEIGHT JACKET -- RED ONLY				
WITHOUT name & call			\$41.00	
WITH name & call			\$45.00	
GARS BADGE -- WITH name & call			\$9.00	
HAT -- WITHOUT name & call				
Red			\$9.00	
White			\$9.00	
HAT -- WITH name & call				
Red			\$14.00	
White			\$14.00	

TOTAL ORDER PRICE: _____

Please attach your check made payable to GARS and return to Dick Sandberg, N9SXJ or mail to:

GARS
P.O. Box 88
Lilburn, Georgia 30048

NOTE: Please allow at least 4 weeks for delivery of items. Some items may need to be special ordered.

Thanks and 73s! -- Dick N9SXJ

Gwinnett Amateur Radio Society
P.O. Box 88
Lilburn, GA 30048

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

NEW MEMBER RENEWAL

Amateur Call Sign _____ License _____ Class _____ Novice Technician General
Advanced Extra

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ - _____

Email address _____

Home Telephone _____

Work Telephone _____

Cell Telephone _____

Date of Birth ____ / ____ / ____ (mm/dd/yy)

ARRL Member Yes No Life

Interests _____

I prefer to receive the GARZETTE newsletter by: US Mail Email (please check only one)

Type of Membership

Individual \$30.00 annually
Student \$15.00 annually
Senior \$15.00 annually (over age 65)
Family ** \$35.00 annually

** Available for family members residing at the same address

Optional Contributions

Repeater Fund \$ _____

Scholarship Fund \$ _____

Additional Family Members **

Name _____ Date of Birth ____ / ____ / ____ (mm/dd/yy)

License Class Technician General Extra ARRL Member Yes No Life

Interests _____

Name: _____ Date of Birth ____ / ____ / ____ (mm/dd/yy)

License Class Technician General Extra ARRL Member Yes No Life

Interests _____

I agree to abide by the By-Laws of the Gwinnett Amateur Radio Society and understand that membership is subject to the approval of the Club.

Applicant Signature _____ Date ____ / ____ / ____

GWINNETT COLLISION CENTER, INC.

305 Sharon Ind. Way
Suwanee, Georgia 30024
(770) 945-0161
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Marty Fowler, KE4MLH

Mark Justice

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Manager
KJ4VO

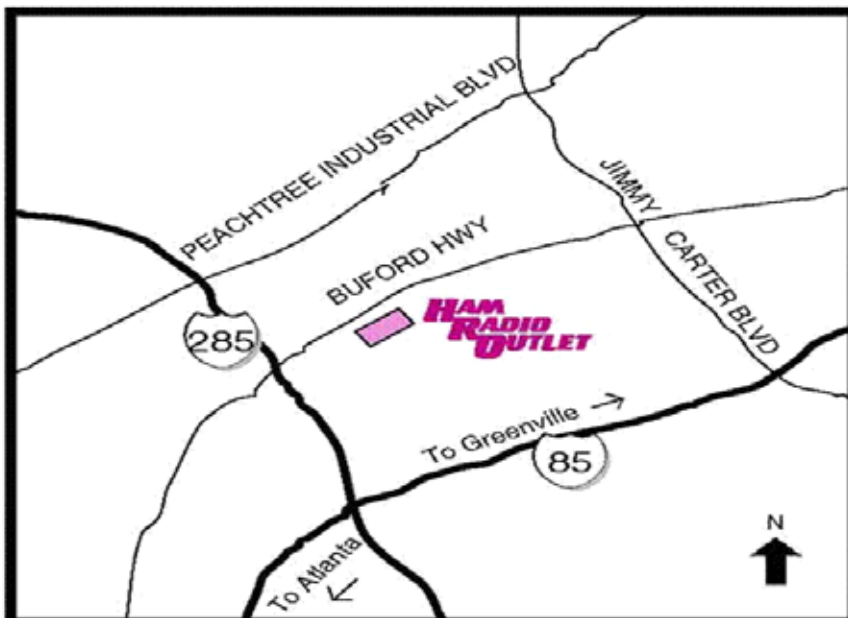
6071 Buford Highway
Atlanta, GA 30340 (Doraville)
770-263-0700 1-800-444-7927
Fax: 770-263-9548
e-mail: atlanta@hamradio.com
hours: 10 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. Mon.-Sat.

John, KI4LMA
Dale, W4GCL

Bill, W5RQR
Jim, N1ABM

David, AI4XL
Josh, W4JDH

Tom, KB4HQA
Brian, WD4DX



Alinco
Icom
Japan Radio Corp.
Premier
ADI
Yaesu
Alpha Delta
Arrow
Butternut
Create
Kenwood
Tarheel
Heil
West Mountain

Cushcraft
Diamond
Force 12
Hustler
Hy-Gain (Telex)
KLM
Larsen
M2
Valor
Van Gorden
MFJ
Ameritron
Comet

Gwinnett Amateur Radio Society
P.O. Box 88
Lilburn, GA 30048



GARS Recurring Calendar

• The monthly club meeting is normally the second Tuesday of every month at 7 p.m. ***There will be no meeting in December.***

Check the [website](#) for location.

• Every Monday at 8 p.m. local time: ***GARS Want, Swap, Sell, and Information Net*** on the GARS 2 meter repeater.

• Every Wednesday at 9 p.m. local time: ***GARS 6 meter net*** on the GARS 6 meter repeater.

• Every Saturday at 7:30 a.m. local time: ***GARS Weekly Family Breakfast***, Golden Corral Restaurant, Riverside Drive, Lawrenceville.

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when buying or selling real estate.
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* * References available upon request.